A Level English Language (AQA)

Head of Department: Miss L Derby

93% A*-C in 2026

A Level English Language explores the study of English Language both as a medium of communication and as a topic in its own right, with an emphasis on your ability to pursue lines of enquiry, debate different views, and work independently to research aspects of language in use. Language is seen as a creative tool for expression and social connection, as well as for individual cognition. The study of language as a symbolic system used to assert power in society is also fundamental to the scope of this course. You will create texts and reflect critically on your own processes of production, while analysing the texts produced by others.

Paper 1: Language, the Individual and Society: 2h 30m – 40% of A Level
The aim of this part of the course is to introduce you to language study, exploring textual variety and children's language development. It introduces you to methods of language analysis to explore concepts of audience, purpose, genre, mode and representation. It also introduces you to the study of children's language development, exploring how children learn language and how they are able to understand and express themselves through language.

Paper 2: Language Diversity and Change: 2h 30m – 40% of A Level
The aim of this area of study is to allow you to explore language diversity and change over time. You will study the key concepts of audience, purpose,genre and mode and will explore language in its wider social, geographical and historical contexts. You will explore processes of language change. This part of the subject content also requires you to study social attitudes to, and debates about, language diversity and change.

Language Investigation & Original Writing – Non-Exam Assessment: Language in Action – 20% of A Level
The aim of this area of study is to allow you to explore and analyse language data independently and develop and reflect upon your own writing expertise. It requires you to carry out two different kinds of individual research:

1. Language investigation (2,000 words excluding data)
2. Original writing and commentary (750 words each)

What transferable skills does English Language promote?
Employers want people with proven motivation, intelligence, and ability to work independently. An English Language A Level shows that you have all of these qualities. Additionally, the ability to communicate is very valuable for almost any job. Studying English Language teaches you how to write clearly and effectively, which is required in most careers, for example when giving presentations and seminar discussions. You will also develop your ability to understand and express sophisticated ideas and theories. That ability to read, reflect, and critique – and then synthesise conclusions clearly – is essential to most kinds of work – as is the ability to construct and defend an argument.

To which careers does English Language lend itself?
In essence any career that requires good communication skills, analysis, inference and argument – i.e. virtually all careers. But the typical destinations of English Language students include: management, administration, teaching and other education work, writing, publishing, PR, journalism, speech and language therapy.